The Nest
CARE & HOLIDAY CLUB

Protecting the Setting's Operational Integrity and Safeguarding Staff Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

The setting is committed to providing a safe, respectful and professional environment for children, families, staff, students and visitors. We recognise that effective safeguarding extends beyond the protection of children and includes safeguarding staff wellbeing, maintaining professional standards, and protecting the operational integrity of the setting.

We value positive partnerships with parents and carers and encourage open communication. However, the setting also has a duty to ensure that staff can carry out their roles without fear of harassment, intimidation, abuse, unfounded allegations or unreasonable disruption to the safe operation of the provision.
All decisions made by the setting will prioritise the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Protect the wellbeing, safety and professional reputation of staff.
- Promote respectful and constructive communication between families and the setting.
- Ensure concerns and complaints are managed fairly and appropriately.
- Protect the setting from behaviour that may adversely affect its operation, reputation or ability to safeguard children.
- Maintain a safe and professional environment for all members of the setting community.

Professional Conduct and Respect

We expect all adults associated with the setting to treat one another with dignity, courtesy and respect.

The following behaviours are not acceptable:

- Abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour.
- Harassment of staff, volunteers or other families.
- Aggressive communication by telephone, email, social media or in person.
- Personal attacks against staff members.
- Sharing confidential or inaccurate information about children, families or staff.
- Recording staff or children without permission.
- Attempts to undermine safeguarding procedures or operational decisions.

Any behaviour that causes staff distress or disrupts the safe operation of the setting may be addressed under this policy.

Reasonable Expectations and Partnership Working
The setting is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and recognises that families may occasionally have concerns, requests or differing views.

To ensure fairness to all children and families, the setting will consider all requests and concerns reasonably and proportionately, considering safeguarding requirements, operational needs, staffing arrangements, policies and the needs of the wider setting community.

While the setting will always seek to be responsive and supportive, it may not be possible to accommodate every individual preference, request or expectation. Decisions will be made in the best interests of children and the effective operation of the provision.

Parents and carers are expected to engage with the setting respectfully and to recognise that staff have responsibilities to all children and families, not solely to individual children or families.

Repeated demands for immediate responses, excessive correspondence, attempts to revisit matters that have been fully considered and concluded, or behaviour that places unreasonable pressure on staff may be managed in accordance with this policy.

Shared Responsibilities
Successful partnership working relies upon both the setting and parents/carers fulfilling their respective responsibilities.

The setting is responsible for providing information through its established communication channels and for making reasonable efforts to ensure important information is communicated in a timely manner.
Parents and carers are responsible for regularly checking communications issued by the setting, including emails, notice boards, parent communication platforms, and other agreed methods of communication.

The setting cannot accept responsibility where information has been appropriately communicated but has not been read, accessed or acted upon by a parent or carer.

Parents and carers are expected to take reasonable responsibility for:

- Reading communications issued by the setting.
- Meeting published deadlines for bookings, payments, forms and responses.
- Keeping contact details up to date.
- Providing information requested by the setting within required timescales.
- Checking dates, times and arrangements for events, activities and sessions.

- Raising queries promptly where clarification is required.

While the setting will endeavour to issue reminders where practical, reminders are provided as a courtesy and should not be relied upon as the sole source of information.

The setting will not normally be able to make exceptions, alter arrangements or accept responsibility where opportunities, events, deadlines or services have been missed due to communications not being read or acted upon.

Where concerns arise relating to matters that have been clearly communicated, the setting will review whether its communication procedures have been followed appropriately and will seek to resolve any misunderstandings in a fair and proportionate manner.

Communication with Staff

The setting encourages parents and carers to raise concerns promptly through the appropriate channels.

To ensure staff remain focused on the supervision and safeguarding of children:

- Staff may not be available to engage in lengthy discussions during arrival and collection times.
- Telephone calls may not always be answered immediately during operational periods.
- Parents may be asked to arrange an appointment to discuss concerns in detail.
- Communication should always remain respectful and constructive.
- Staff should not be contacted through personal social media accounts, personal telephone numbers or personal email addresses regarding setting matters.
- The setting may establish reasonable communication arrangements where contact becomes excessive, repetitive or impacts the effective operation of the provision.

Managing Concerns and Complaints

The setting welcomes feedback and recognises the importance of addressing concerns fairly and transparently.

Where concerns arise:

1. Parents should raise the matter directly with the setting.
2. The setting will investigate concerns objectively and proportionately.
3. Outcomes will be communicated where appropriate.
4. Records of concerns and actions taken will be maintained.

The setting reserves the right to cease correspondence where matters have been fully investigated and concluded, and no new information has been provided.

This does not prevent the setting from considering any new safeguarding concerns or significant new information that may arise.

Social Media and Online Conduct
Parents and carers are expected to use social media responsibly.

The following are considered inappropriate:

- Naming or identifying staff members without consent.
- Publishing allegations or complaints before raising them through the appropriate procedures.
- Sharing misleading, false or defamatory information.
- Encouraging others to target, harass or criticise individual staff members or the setting.
- Posting information that could compromise confidentiality or safeguarding.

Where necessary, the setting may seek advice from external agencies or legal advisers regarding online conduct that affects staff wellbeing or the safe operation of the provision.

Protection from Unfounded Allegations
The setting recognises that allegations against staff can have significant personal and professional consequences.

Any allegation concerning a member of staff will be:

- Taken seriously.
- Managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Investigated fairly and confidentially.
- Recorded appropriately.

The setting will support staff throughout any investigation and will take appropriate action where allegations are found to be malicious, vexatious or intentionally misleading.

Staff Wellbeing
The setting is committed to supporting staff wellbeing by:

- Promoting a culture of mutual respect.
- Providing supervision and support opportunities.
- Addressing incidents of abuse or harassment promptly.
- Taking reasonable steps to reduce unnecessary workplace stress.
- Ensuring staff can work in an environment where they feel safe, supported and valued.

Operational Integrity

The setting has a responsibility to ensure its resources remain focused on delivering high-quality care and education.

The setting reserves the right to manage communications and interactions that become excessive, unreasonable, repetitive or disproportionate in nature. This may include repeated contact regarding matters that have already been addressed, expectations that fall outside the setting's policies or contractual arrangements, or requests that would negatively impact the provision of care and education for other children.

Where behaviour from any individual significantly impacts the safe and effective operation of the provision, the management team may take appropriate action, including:

- Setting communication boundaries.
- Requiring communications to be made in writing.
- Limiting the frequency of communication where appropriate.
- Requesting that meetings are arranged by appointment.
- Restricting access to the setting.
- Referring matters to relevant authorities where appropriate.
- Reviewing whether the setting can continue to meet the needs of the child and family where professional relationships have irretrievably broken down.
- As a last and final resort, withdrawing the child's place at the provision where all reasonable steps have been taken to resolve the situation and it is no longer possible to maintain a safe, effective and constructive working relationship with the family.

Any action taken will be reasonable, proportionate and in accordance with the law.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where legislation, guidance or operational needs require.